



May 16, 2023

Sen. Erin Murphy
3211 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue W
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Sandra Feist
409 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Sen. Murphy and Rep. Feist:

We are writing to reaffirm the Minnesota AFL-CIO’s support for the Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act, SF 1561/HF 1700. This legislation is a comprehensive, worker-centered approach to the nursing workforce challenges facing Minnesota. It will not only ensure safe staffing levels to protect patients, but it will also provide mental health support, workplace violence prevention, student loan forgiveness, and mechanisms to ensure we have enough educators to train future nurses.

The Mayo Clinic has opposed the bill – threatening to halt investments that would impact tens of thousands of union members who depend on construction projects like these to support their families and their communities. Nurse staffing has been a longstanding priority of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, as has creating good paying union jobs for construction workers. Mayo’s attempt to pit one group of workers against another is an unfair and false choice. The Minnesota AFL-CIO supports all union jobs, and we call on the Legislature and the Governor to find a solution that protects union construction jobs and union nurses at the bedside.

The 2023 session of the Minnesota Legislature will likely go down as a historic one for the working people in our state. We are making history with new safety standards, paid time to care, and expanded union rights. The Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act can and should be part of this historic session for both nurses and the patients they care for.

Sincerely,

Bernie Burnham
President

Brad Lehto
Secretary-Treasurer

